

134 Earth Appointment

Kirkjufell Mountain and Kirkjufellsfoss Waterfall, Iceland

This extinct volcano is located on Iceland's north coast. Over 1,500 feet high, it was formed during the Ice Age by the geological forces of glaciers and erosion.

Masai Giraffes in Amboseli National Park, Kenya, Africa

The Masai giraffe, being the tallest and largest terrestrial animal in the world, is the only quadruped that can reach the thorny branches of the acacia tree, which are scattered throughout the park. Great views of Mount Kilimanjaro can be seen across the border in Tanzania.

Grand Prismatic Spring, Midway Geyser Basin, Yellowstone National Park, Wyoming

Deeper than a ten-story building and larger than a football field, this spring has bands of color created by thermophile or heat-loving bacteria. The outer rings of the spring change color due to gradually cooling temperatures.

Hong Island, Thailand

Hong Island is part of an uninhabited marine park. Visitors are drawn to the soft sand beaches and pristine turquoise waters for swimming and snorkeling.

Painted Hills Natural Park, Oregon

The Painted Hills Unit is part of the John Day Fossil Beds National Monument. Stripes of color in the hills and mounds reflect prehistoric layering of volcanic ash, plant material and minerals. Light, weather and the seasons influence the intensity of the coloration.

Coral Reef, Cozumel, Mexico

Cozumel's reef formations span 175 miles and are part of the second largest barrier reef system in the world. The conditions of the crystal clear ocean, populated with sea turtles and tropical fish, are exceptional for underwater exploring.

Second Beach in Olympic National Park, Washington

Second Beach is composed of sea stacks, tide pools, a natural arch and a coastal forest. Bald eagles, seals and whales are common sights along the coastline.

Zhangye Danxia Landform Geological Park, Gansu Province, China

As one of the geological wonders of the world, well-known for its colorful rock formations, this park has been voted by Chinese media outlets as one of the most beautiful landforms in China.

Dragon Blood Trees, Socotra Island, Yemen

Dragon Blood trees are found only on the island of Socotra in the Arabian Sea. The trees release a red resin used for traditional medicinal purposes, dyes, paints and cosmetics.

Dunes in Sossusvlei, Namib-Naukluft National Park, Namibia

This ancient pyramid-shaped sand dune is among the tallest in the world reaching a height of 1,000 feet. Namibia means "land of open spaces" which accommodates the largest game park in Africa.

Denali National Park, Alaska

"Denali" means "the high one" in the native Athabaskan language and refers to the mountain itself, which is the tallest peak in North America. In 1980, Mount McKinley National Park was combined with Denali National Monument to be renamed Denali National Park and Preserve.

Proxy Falls, Three Sisters Wilderness Area, Oregon

Three Sisters Wilderness is the second largest wilderness area in Oregon. It encompasses forests, alpine meadows, lakes and volcanic landforms. Proxy Falls cascades over streams, rocks and fallen logs from a height of over 200 feet.

Strawberry Spinach Salad

12 oz. baby spinach
16 oz. strawberries, quartered or sliced
1 c. chopped walnuts

Dressing:

1/2 c. light olive oil
1/4 c. red wine vinegar
1/4 c. sugar
1 tsp. dried mustard
1 tsp. poppy seeds, optional
Salt to taste

Combine spinach, strawberries, and walnuts in large bowl. Whisk dressing ingredients, add to salad and toss.

Asian Pork and Pineapple Kabobs

1 lb. boneless pork loin roast, 19 cubes
3/4 c. teriyaki marinade, divided
2 c. pineapple chunks, 19 cubes
1 red bell pepper, 19 squares
4 green onions, 29 pieces
Thai peanut sauce, optional
Steamed rice

Place pork cubes in a plastic bag. Add 1/2 c. of the teriyaki marinade. Seal bag and refrigerate 2 to 4 hours. Remove pork from marinade and discard. Thread pork, pineapple, red peppers and green onions onto skewers. Grill kabobs over medium heat, turning to brown evenly (10-12 minutes). Brush kabobs with 1/4 c. reserved marinade. Let rest 3 minutes before serving. Serve kabobs with peanut sauce on steamed rice.

Grilled Chicken Salad with Avocados

4 boneless skinless chicken breasts
6 c. mixed greens, washed and dried
12 cherry tomatoes, halved
2 avocados, sliced lengthwise
Pomegranate seeds

Vinaigrette:

3 tbsp. extra virgin olive oil
1 tbsp. vinegar (balsamic, white wine or apple cider)
Kosher salt and fresh pepper to taste

Preheat grill to medium (425°- 450°F). Prepare vinaigrette and salad. Coat chicken breasts with olive oil, season to taste and place on grill. Cook until meat thermometer reads 160°F. Allow chicken to rest. Slice and arrange over tossed mixed salad greens.

Raspberry-Yogurt Parfait

2 tsp. cornstarch
2 tsp. warm water
2 to 3 c. raspberries
Dollop of raspberry jam
2 c. crunchy granola
1 qt. vanilla yogurt
1 c. or more fresh raspberries, for garnish

Whisk cornstarch with warm water. In saucepan over medium heat, combine raspberries, jam and cornstarch mixture. Bring to a boil, stir constantly until thick and consistency is glossy. Cool sauce slightly. In individual parfait glasses, alternate layers of granola, yogurt and raspberry sauce. Garnish with fresh raspberries.

Soy Glazed Grilled Salmon with Fresh Summer Salad

1-1/2 lbs. salmon fillets
1 lemon
3 cloves of garlic, minced or pressed
Freshly ground pepper
Kosher salt

Marinade:

1/3 c. soy sauce
1/3 c. brown sugar
1/3 c. water
1/4 c. olive oil

Season salmon fillets with lemon juice and a coating of garlic, pepper, and salt. Combine soy sauce, brown sugar, water, and olive oil. Mix until sugar is dissolved. Place salmon in marinade; turn to coat. Refrigerate 2 hours. Preheat grill to medium (425°- 450°F). Place salmon on grill; discard marinade. Cook 6 to 8 minutes per side (or until slightly browned).

Baked Macaroni and Cheese

7 tbsp. unsalted butter
1/4 c. plus 2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
4 c. milk
1-1/2 tsp. dry mustard
1/8 tsp. cayenne pepper
1 lb. elbow macaroni
3 c. coarsely grated extra-sharp cheddar cheese (about 12 oz.)
1-1/3 c. freshly shredded Parmesan cheese (about 4 oz.)
Fresh basil, optional garnish

Preheat oven to 350°F. Butter a 3 to 4 qt. casserole dish. In heavy saucepan, melt 6 tbsp. butter over low heat. Add flour and cook roux, whisking for 3 minutes. Add milk, whisk while bringing to boil. Add mustard, cayenne. Simmer sauce until thickened, stirring occasionally. Cook macaroni in salted boiling water until al dente (about 7 minutes). Drain well. In large bowl, stir macaroni, sauce, cheddar, and 1 c. Parmesan. Transfer to prepared dish. Cut remaining 1 tbsp. butter into pieces and sprinkle evenly over macaroni along with remaining 1/3 c. Parmesan. Bake on center rack 25 to 30 minutes, or until bubbling.

Cherry Tomato, Black Olive and Mozzarella Pizza

129 pizza crust
8 oz. marinara sauce
1 garlic clove, pressed
1/4 tsp. dried crushed red pepper
12 oz. cherry tomatoes, sliced in half
6 oz. fresh mozzarella, sliced
4 oz. black olives, sliced
1 tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil
1/4 c. fresh basil leaves

Preheat oven to 375°F. Heat marinara sauce in pan with garlic and crushed red pepper for 5 minutes. Spread thin layer of sauce over pizza crust, followed by cherry tomatoes (cut side down). Add fresh mozzarella and black olives. Drizzle with 1 tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil. Bake pizza 25 to 30 minutes. Garnish with fresh basil leaves.

Roast Turkey with Cranberry Orange Glaze

14 pound whole turkey (defrosted)

Glaze:

3/4 c. orange marmalade

3/4 c. frozen cranberry juice
concentrate, thawed

3 tbsp. maple syrup

1-1/2 tbsp. balsamic vinegar

1/2 tsp. salt

1 c. butter

Preheat oven to 325°F. Combine marmalade, cranberry juice concentrate, maple syrup, vinegar and salt in small saucepan. Bring to a boil on medium heat; stirring frequently. Reduce to low heat, stirring occasionally for 12 to 15 minutes or until glaze is reduced to one cup. Prepare turkey: Remove neck and giblets; Set aside or discard. Drain juices from bird and pat dry. Place breast-side up in shallow roasting pan. Rub butter generously on turkey. Roast for 2 hours. Cover breast loosely with foil to prevent overcooking. Continue roasting for 45 minutes. Remove foil and brush generously with glaze. Return foil to loosely cover turkey. Cook 45 minutes longer, or until meat thermometer reaches 165°F in breast of bird. Brush with remaining glaze. Let stand about 20 minutes before carving.